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THE
COMMERCIAL INDEPENDENCE
OF CANADA.

AN ADDRESS

Delivered 26th January, 1883, to the Reform Associations of Centre
Toronto, on "The Right of Canada to make her own
Commercial Treaties."

BY
JAMES D. EDGAR,
BARRISTER AT LAW,
Formerly Member of the Dominion Parliament.

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COMMERCIAL INDEPENDENCE ;

OR,

CANADA'S RIGHT TO MAKE HER OWN COMMERCIAL TREATIES.

In addressing the Liberals of Centre Toronto upon the Commercial Independence of Canada I am introducing no new topic, for during my election campaign as your candidate last summer, I never failed to refer to it in my speeches. Although other issues carried the popular verdict against us, my views upon this point always met the approval of the audiences to whom they were submitted. At an earlier date, when addressing the Yorkville Reform Association about a year ago, I selected that subject as the one, of all questions within the domain of practical politics, which seemed to possess the deepest national interest for Canadians. The proposal that Canada should claim the right to make her own commercial treaties with foreign countries had then been recently met by taunts of "veiled treason" from the Conservative leader and his organs. At the risk of being

Charged with Disloyalty,

I endeavored to point out that Canadians are quite as much entitled to rights of self-government in respect to trade questions, whether domestic or foreign, as are our fellow subjects who happen to reside in the British Isles. In tariff matters we have for many years asserted the right to fix our duties. Parliament may think to be best for Canada. And here I wish emphatically to repudiate an insinuation our political opponents sometimes make, to the effect that the Reform Party objects to the Tilley tariff, for the reason that it embodies a strong assertion of our national right to adopt our own tariff policy. In that regard we have no fault to find, but we condemn the inconsistencies and mistakes, the impolicy and commercial fallacies, which we believe it to contain. The party which has placed on record, more than once, its conviction that

Canada should have the power to make her own commercial treaties, would not be found opposed to asserting a right to the fullest control over our customs duties.

Within the past year the Liberal party in the House of Commons united to a man in support of Mr. Blake's direct motion in favor of Commercial Independence. The debate upon that occasion was remarkable for the difficulty the Government experienced in obtaining speakers to oppose the motion, and for an entire failure to prevent their followers from advocating it. Out of eleven who spoke, only three belonged to the Opposition; yet eight warmly supported Mr. Blake, although Ministers declared it to be a motion of want of confidence. Sir John Macdonald and Sir Hector Langevin were the only members of the House who chose to commit themselves by speeches against the proposition. Some of the Conservatives supported Mr. Blake because they believed the high tariff would increase certain products of the country, and that we should, therefore, now

Look for Foreign Markets

as outlets for these products. Without in any way entering upon a discussion of the Tilley tariff, I desire to refer to some of its anticipated consequences. The electors have again approved of the protective tariff, which is intended to give the manufacturers control of the home markets. Let us assume that this has been fully accomplished by the tariff, and that the manufacturers are able to supply the home demand. What, then, is the result which we have been promised? Cheap goods, by reason of competition, of course; and it has never been denied that at least lower profits to the manufacturer must follow, where the trade is of a character to render combinations, and rings, and monopolies impossible. Therefore, wherever combination to keep up prices is not possible, we may expect to have over-production.

When that time shall have arrived it is not the public—the consumers—who alone will complain. Skill, capital, and energy will have entered upon

A Fierce Competition,

suicidal struggle, in a very restricted market. I ask the intelligent manufacturer, what is he going to do about it? Is he not looking forward to that state of affairs? Will he be satisfied to have his profits cut down by competition to the lowest point, without the possibility of expanding his business beyond the limits of Canada? If our manufacturer has skill and capital he will not object to smaller profits, provided he can conduct his

operations on a larger scale. And where is he to get that market? He sees that under present commercial arrangements it is impossible to have access to the great market to the south of us. He knows that there are countries in all quarters of the globe, where a demand for his manufactures could be created. He knows that his chief rival, perhaps his only competitor for that trade, is the British manufacturer. In our tariff there are duties which we might easily strike off, in order to cultivate a reciprocal trade with some of these foreigners. Yet the only means that our manufacturer has to whisper such proposals in the ear of the customer he wishes to secure, is through the mouth of the British ambassador or envoy, who is the Representative of the British manufacturer, and who is not our Representative. The Canadian manufacturer must not forget that his fellow subjects of Manchester and of Sheffield elect the men to the English Parliament, who send the Representatives abroad, and pay the cost of all diplomatic service. It is, therefore, unreasonable to blame the Manchester man, or the Sheffield man, for insisting that

His Special Trade Interests

in such matters are British and Imperial interests, and as such must be maintained, paramount and supreme by all Her Majesty's accredited Representatives abroad. His benevolence would be unexampled, should he permit men, whom he both appoints and pays, to assist a trade rival in a common field of competition. Yet his good sense should teach him that we feel quite as deep an interest in our trade as he does in his, and he should not be horrified when we ask to be allowed to look after our peculiar commercial interests, in our own way, and through our own envoys.

There is another great difficulty in the way of our asking a British Representative to undertake negotiations for us with a foreign power, because that would require of the negotiator the recognition and even the defence of our protective system. This we know to be totally repugnant to the British system, and to be

Repudiated by England

in all her negotiations with foreign countries, as being altogether selfish and unsound. It is improbable that any modification of our tariff, which could be made by either political party in Canada, would remove its objectionable features in this respect, because our tariff must be made for Canada, not for England. We cannot anticipate Canadian Free

Trade in the English sense ; and, therefore, in commercial negotiations her Representatives cannot be our Representatives.

When the Parliament of Canada adopted a Trade Policy, in principle and practice diametrically opposed to that of England, we naturally looked to the leaders of our Parliament, the promoters and expounders of that policy, to take such steps, after its adoption, as would open up new avenues of trade for us by

Direct Negotiations with Other Nations.

Let us see, then, what was done.

Sir Alex. Galt is a public man who has, in his time, held advanced views, and has taken strong and sound positions as to Canada's right to negotiate her own treaties. In many respects no better man could be selected to represent us abroad. With a view to have Sir Alex. Galt accredited by the Queen as the representative of Canada to foreign Courts, for this very purpose of negotiating treaties of commerce, Sir John Macdonald, Sir L. Tilley and Sir C. Tupper, who were together in London in the autumn of 1879, handed in a joint memorandum to the English Government, which set forth our position very fairly.

In it they say :—" It is further submitted that the very large and "augmenting commerce of Canada, and the increasing extent of her "trade with foreign nations, are proving the absolute need of *direct negotiations* with them for the proper protection of her interests. In "most of the treaties of commerce entered into by England, reference "has only been had to their effect on the United Kingdom ; and the "colonies are excluded from their operation, a fact which has been attended with most

Unfortunate Results to Canada

"as relates to France. This is to a certain extent unavoidable, in consequence of the control of all Customs having been granted to Canada ; "but a necessity has thus arisen for providing separate and distinct trade "conventions with all foreign powers with whom Canada has distinct trade. "With the differing views held by the Parliament of Canada on such subjects from those of Her Majesty's Government, there is a manifest difficulty in asking the latter to become responsible for the representations "required to be made, and foreign Governments find it difficult "to understand our present system." I should rather think they would ! Imagine an English free trade envoy trying to expound to a protectionist foreign Government the beauties and mysteries of the Canadian N.P., after having on all previous occasions urged upon the

same Government to abandon the ruinous fallacies of protection. The paper goes on to say :—"The Canadian Government therefore submit "that when occasion requires such negotiations to be undertaken, Her Majesty's Government should advise Her Majesty specially to accredit the representative of Canada to the foreign Court by association "for the special object, with the resident Minister or other Imperial "negotiator. * * And then, when so requested, the proposed Minister should be duly accredited to foreign Courts in the manner above "mentioned." In order that there may be no sort of doubt about the glory attached to the position, it is urged that "the dignity of the office, and the advantage of its proper recognition,

Especially at Foreign Courts,

"appear to require a more expressive title than that of Agent-General, "it is therefore suggested that the designation should be Resident "Minister."

These are brave words, and most of us can remember certain Tory organs lecturing Liberals as being disloyal subjects for venturing to hint at just such proposals. I like to recall the manly language of this memorandum as a sort of shelter for myself, which may, perhaps, be required on this very occasion. But let us see what came of all this fine talking. The answer to it was written from Downing-street on 1st November, 1879, in a despatch to the Marquis of Lorne. If there be one point more than another on which Sir John Macdonald prides himself, it is his precise knowledge of the relations between Governments, and of the formalities and etiquette of high international intercourse. He took Mr. Blake very severely to task, indeed, last session, and accused him of betraying lamentable ignorance as to the proprieties in these matters. Curiously enough, the Colonial Secretary began by imputing to our three gallant knights an entire misconception of the position a

Canadian Representative

could possibly occupy. It is sad to think how he spoke of our "Resident Minister," whose dignified position was to make so magnificent an impression, "especially at Foreign Courts." He soon settles that point by saying,—“The relations of such a person with Her Majesty's Government would not be correctly defined as being of a diplomatic character, and his position would necessarily be more analagous to that of an officer in the Home Service, than to that of a Minister to a Foreign Court.” But worse is in store for our unfortunate Envoy, who not only

loses his "diplomatic character and position," but even his high-sounding name. Our Downing-street master says,—“It would seem, for the reasons I have stated, more appropriate that the officer should be designated by the title of ‘Dominion’ or ‘Canadian Commissioner,’ than by any title implying a diplomatic status or position.”

There was still room to hope that having thus cruelly shattered colonial aspirations for another "title," having dissipated the shadow, they might have left us some grains of substantial comfort by at least recognizing our right to initiate negotiations with foreign countries, whenever questions of vital commercial concern to us might arise. But not so. Sir Michael Hicks Beach forbids it! It is

The Old Story Over Again.

Our representative must be tossed to and fro between the Colonial Office and the Foreign Office—received at both with painful politeness, of course, but feeling, with despair, that he is engaged in a hopeless effort to interest them in affairs of ours, which they neither care for, nor understand. Listen to what the Colonial Secretary pre-emptorily insists upon, as the only way in which we are to be permitted to open and conduct those wonderful "direct negotiations with foreign nations." Of our representative it is ordered as follows:—

"He would therefore primarily communicate with this Department on the various subjects which might be entrusted to him, and while Her Majesty's Government would readily avail themselves of any information he might afford, and give the fullest consideration to any representations he might make on behalf of the Canadian Government, it would of course, rest with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to determine, in each case, in what precise capacity his services might best be rendered in the event of any negotiations with a Foreign Court on subjects affecting the interests of the Dominion. In some instances, for example, it might be desirable for him to remain in London, and advise with Her Majesty's Government there, while in other cases he might, in accordance with the precedents which have been quoted, be more usefully engaged in assisting Her Majesty's representatives abroad."

To use Mr. Mackenzie's words of last session, "he has to sit in an outer room when the two ambassadors are discussing matters, and, if his opinion is thought to be worth anything, he is

Called in and Asked Questions."

Such was the result of the last effort made by the Government of this great country to secure the long looked-for opportunity of opening "direct negotiations with foreign countries,"—An ignominious and disastrous failure! A failure rendered the more signal from the jaunty and confident manner in which the proposal was made, and the peremptory way in which it was rejected.

And how did our champions brook the treatment their scheme had received at the hands of the Colonial Secretary? Surely the time had

come for firm and dignified remonstrance on behalf of the people of this Dominion against the intolerable humiliation of that despatch? Heaven forbid that our interests, and our honor, should again be entrusted to the keeping of three titled Canadians! The K.C.B. and the two K.C.M.G.s cowered before the Downing-street official. In the presence of the man whose magic pen distributes the ribbons and stars of third-class orders of knighthood to tickle the silly vanity of conquered Asiatics, and of tuft-hunting colonists, they forgot the four millions of injured Canadians. They basely knelt and kissed the rod that smote them. In their

Abject Reply

of 22nd Dec., 1879, they "desire to express their gratification at the manner in which their views have been met by Her Majesty's Government," and "would further respectfully submit that the Government of Canada, in respect of negotiations with foreign powers *in no respect desire to be placed in the position of independent negotiators.*" Such were their words. What a fall was there, my countrymen!

It would be distasteful to follow them through their whining apology for having committed themselves to an application for Commercial Independence. They withdrew entirely from their original position, and finally expressed themselves as perfectly satisfied to "understand that "in all cases of Commercial Treaties, Her Majesty's Government will "direct early communication to be made to the Canadian Representative, so as to permit him to take the instructions of his Government, "and to make such representations as may be called for to Her Majesty's "Government."

Are we to be told at this late day that Her Majesty's Government is one thing, and our Government is another affair? Instead of accepting so meekly this conspicuous snubbing, should it not have been pointed out that, so far as Canadian interests are concerned, Her Majesty has a Government in Canada? To quote again from Mr. Mackenzie's speech on this question:—"English statesmen know also, and

Must be Taught if They Don't Know it,

that a Canadian Privy Councillor is Her Majesty's Privy Councillor, and as such they occupy no inferior position."

If this ground had been taken, or if the arguments and conclusions arrived at in their original memorandum had been boldly adhered to, the people of Canada would have heartily sustained the position of the Ministry on that question, and the Home Government would have promptly conceded our demands. But a critical episode of our constitutional history came and went. Canada wavered, faltered, retired, and Downing street triumphed. Instead of our advancing in liberty, new fetters were forged to hamper our freedom of self control, with the result of manifest injury to material interests, and the suppression of all our national aspirations.

The warmest advocates of progress and liberty are always to be found among the youth of a country. Their quick sympathies and generous

natures resent oppression and yearn for fuller freedom. What a deplorable spectacle it is for the young men of Canada to see how little their feelings are shared or reflected by most of the elder statesmen of the old Provincial era. When they read of this weak surrender to Downing street, their young cheeks will tingle with anger and with shame. They cannot refrain from contrasting the humiliating capitulation of the three knights with the firm, dignified and patriotic attitude maintained in 1876 by

Edward Blake.

when, as Minister of Justice, he secured from the Imperial Government the complete revision and modification of the Royal Instructions to the Governor General. He found that many portions of the Instructions, under which Lord Dufferin received authority to act, were quite inconsistent with a proper recognition of the freedom of our system of parliamentary government, and he did not hesitate to say so very plainly. Take for example, clause 5 of the Instructions, which is as follows:—"And we do further direct that if in any case, you see any sufficient cause to dissent from the opinion of the major part or of the whole of our said Privy Council so present, it shall be competent for you to exercise the powers and authorities vested in you by our said Commission, and by these our Instructions, in opposition to such their opinion." Mr. Blake, in commenting upon this clause said, "It seems to authorize action in opposition to the advice, not merely of a particular set of Ministers, but of any Ministers. * * * The effort to reconcile by any form of words, the responsibilities of Ministers under the Canadian Constitution, with a power to the Governor-General to take even a negative line independently of advice cannot, I think, succeed. The truth is that Imperial interests are under our present system of government to be secured in matters of Canadian Executive policy, not by any clause in a Governor's Instructions, (which would be practically inoperative, and if it can be supposed to be operative would be mischievous;) but by mutual good feeling, and by proper consideration for Imperial interests on the part of Her Majesty's Canadian advisers." Mr. Blake therefore proposed that clause 5 should be omitted; and it has disappeared from the Instructions to the Marquis of Lorne.

Clause 9 specified eight different classes of Bills, which were to be reserved for the Royal Assent—in other words, the Legislation on those important questions should first be

Revised by the Home Government

before becoming operative. In Mr. Blake's criticism of that clause he said:—"It appears to me that in all the classes of cases mentioned in the clause referred to, save perhaps class 8, it would be better and more conformable to the spirit of the constitution of Canada, as actually framed, that the legislation should be completed on the advice and responsibility of Her Majesty's Privy Council for Canada." Mr. Blake's views were fully adopted, and all reference to reserved bills was omitted from the new Instructions.

Again, it had been directed that in murder cases the Governor should decide either to extend or to withhold a pardon or reprieve, according to his own deliberate judgment, whether the members of his Privy Council concurred therein or not. Mr. Blake had this objectionable feature changed into a direction that the Governor should not pardon or reprieve any offender without first receiving in capital cases the advice of the Privy Council, and in other cases the advice of one at least of his Ministers. And so on, throughout the whole negotiations Mr. Blake was

Entirely Successful.

No other Canadian statesman had ever obtained so many valuable concessions, and such complete recognition of our absolute right to manage our own internal affairs in our own way. It is remarkable evidence of how little Sir John Macdonald troubled himself about extending our powers of self-government, that he had been twenty years in office without having ventured to call in question these anomalous and highly objectionable features of the Royal Instructions.

No less singular was the apathy shown by the present Ottawa authorities in relation to extradition matters. The old treaty of 1842 between England and the United States is not at all what we require, and if we had the power to negotiate a new one, this country would no longer be the refuge for criminals that it is. In 1877, Mr. Blake carried through an Act to facilitate and simplify the process of deporting foreign criminals under all

Extradition Treaties.

In order to take effect, action was required by way of proclamation on the part of the Imperial Government, but it was only after the lapse of more than five years that this was secured.

Referring once more to the debate upon Mr. Blake's motion of last session, we find that Sir John did Canada the honor of comparing our position with that of Cuba, and of Algeria, in order to show that we could not expect larger treaty-making powers than France and Spain allow to those dependencies. This reference was doubly unfortunate. Our infinitely greater resources, population, and territory, render the comparison singularly unfair. Besides, Spain and France can hardly claim to be the warmest advocates of colonial constitutional liberties. Yet, when we examine even the present condition of

Cuba and Algeria.

in this respect we find them far in advance of us. While we are not in any sense, neither by political theory, nor constitutional fiction, represented by the British Foreign Office, or their agents, Cuba and Algeria are each directly represented by French or Spanish Ministers, because they each send their own representatives to the Legislatures of the mother countries. Cuba and Algeria have, therefore, a direct voice in sending out every ambassador, who may have to deal with their commercial affairs; and they could no more ask to be allowed to negotiate separ-

ately than could Scotland or Ireland make that demand from the British Government. Our position is rendered more impregnable than ever by Sir John's illustration.

It cannot be successfully argued that the nations of the world would not

Value our Trade.

We are large and growing consumers of foreign commodities. Our own products of the field and forest, for export, are enormous. In that vast variety of articles manufactured out of wood—all the way from a ship to a shoe-peg—our facilities of production excel those of any country. It cannot be doubted that if we were allowed to make arrangements for direct commercial relations with all countries, instead of having to do most of our trade with them through England, our natural advantages would be much more fully developed. Let us take a glance at our trade with Great Britain, and see if it be not of an importance sufficient to justify a belief that we have some value to offer other countries in that way. I find that it amounts to upwards of one hundred and nine millions of dollars annually! This is in itself an enormous sum, but after a comparison with the trade of other nations with England it is still more remarkable. Perhaps the fairest test of the volume of the foreign commerce of any country is to ascertain its export trade, and its import trade, with the United Kingdom. Portugal's trade is less than one-third of ours, and ours

Exceeds the Aggregate Trade

of Italy, Denmark and Greece. These are each kingdoms, with all the state and paraphernalia of royalty, and the right to send forth to the world ambassadors of the highest order, and most imposing rank. There are, also, in all parts of the globe, independent nationalities, which have discarded both kings and emperors, but have the fullest privileges of carrying on such negotiations as may seem good in their eyes with other Powers. Let us see how our commerce will compare with theirs. The Argentine Republic, Bolivia, Guatemala, San Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Chili, United States of Columbia, Ecuador, Hayti, Peru, and Venezuela have extensive trade relations with the United Kingdom, but the aggregate of that trade done by the whole of these thirteen Republics is less than Canada's by ten million dollars yearly! It appears, then, that we have a trade to offer all the world, and yet we are not competent to bargain about the terms on which we shall trade. It appears that in real commercial importance

We Far Outrank

most of the nations of the earth, and yet our Downing-street master says that we shall not be officially recognized by the meanest of them. Of all those little States are none so poor to do us reverence. We are a mere geographical expression, but we have our uses. Are we not an admirable field for absorbing England's surplus population? Do we not afford an excellent market for her wares?

The investigation of the volume of our trade, in comparison with that of other countries, naturally arouses a curiosity to inquire whether there may not be other respects wherein we can claim to rank among the nations. Population and public revenues are everywhere accepted as chief among the elements of national greatness and prosperity. In both these points, Canada conspicuously excels the following twenty-one independent nations, namely:—Denmark, Greece, Switzerland, Chili, Peru, United States of Columbia, Ecuador, Argentine Republic, Madagascar, Liberia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Hayti, Hawaiian Islands, Paraguay, San Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. The revenue of Canada is greater than the aggregate revenues of the eleven Republics last on this list. The

Population of Canada

is greater than the aggregate population of the nine last named republics. In no one of the last mentioned eight is the population equal to the bare increase of the population in Canada during the ten years between 1871 and 1881.

These interesting statistics ought to afford a reply—final and conclusive—to the usual argument against our seeking Commercial Independence, based upon the idea that we are too feeble to enforce treaties, even if allowed to make them. If that were true, then more than half the nations of the world are also too weak to enforce treaties. Yet they do make treaties, which are respected as international compacts. Do Switzerland, Denmark, Portugal and Greece, refrain from entering into treaties with any of the Five Great Powers because the weaker nations could not compel their observance by the edge of the sword? Let us have our treaties, then. Let us abide by them honorably on our part; and thus, better than by a fleet of iron-clads, we shall enforce their observance by the world.

I have made a few comparisons of Canada with other countries as regards relative conditions at the present day. But what country can I find with which to carry along the analogy for the future? Where is another population of four or five millions possessed of such unlimited natural resources, or such powers of immediate expansion? In another decade we shall have left many more nations behind us in the race of material progress. Canada is large enough, and will soon be rich enough, for any future. The simple question for us to face, and the only one, is—Do we possess the internal conditions for becoming a mighty people? Have we

The Human Stock

—the men, the women and the children, with the right physical, mental and moral qualities?

I hope we have not degenerated. Our ancestors, who planted their hearth-stones in the English-speaking Provinces of Canada, were physically, man for man, superior to the stay-at-home Britons. Those who had the enterprise to cross the ocean, and face the unknown conditions

of a distant land, were not the least worthy of England's sons and daughters. As it was in the days when the Dane, the Saxon and the Norman swarmed upon the English shores, so it has always been the bravest and the strongest who have left the cradle of their race, and gone forth to possess new lands, to subdue the wilderness, and force the rugged forms of nature to do them service.

As an argument against the hope which we all cherish, of a permanent and

National Unification

of the various Canadian Provinces, it has been urged that in Quebec there is a large central population differing from the rest in race, language and religion. I think history teaches us that the national sentiment can obliterate these distinctions, and that when once the flame of patriotic ardor has been kindled, it has force to fuse them into a fervent love of country, that can override the traditions of ancient strifes and warring creeds. In our own time there exists in the midst of the armaments of Europe, a people whose patriotism is proverbial, and yet they combine the greatest diversities of race, language and religion. The brave little Swiss Republic comprises French, Germans and Italians, each speaking their own tongue and worshipping in Protestant and Catholic churches in almost equal numbers. Has any one doubted the patriotism of the Swiss?

May I not also ask : Has any one had reason to doubt the patriotism of the

French Canadians ?

They have a record, and a much older one than ours, of devotion to their native land. What country have they to love if it be not Canada ?

Before the Pilgrim Fathers landed on Plymouth Rock, and more than a hundred years before an enterprising young Canadian founded the city of New Orleans, the foundations of Quebec were laid. While the Dutch were peopling the banks of the Hudson, and when the turbulent pioneers of Virginia first began to occupy the broad lands of the old Dominion, the fair plains and proud cities of Normandy and Bretagne were sending forth their brave and hardy sons to dwell beside the waters of the mighty St. Lawrence. For ten generations son has succeeded to father in the French Canadian parishes of Quebec. More than a century ago the fortunes of war severed them from their mother land, but their love for her has not faded. France has changed, and no political alliance is sought by her Canadian children ; but their hearts are still full of a sentimental devotion to the beautiful home of their ancestors. England, with generous wisdom, has made no distinction between her treatment of British and of French Canadians ; and this policy has

Prevented Political Discontent

among the Gallic race. It is a mistake, however, to believe that they have forgotten, or ever can forget, that fatal day upon the Plains of

Abraham; and it will be found that the only public men amongst them who assert the contrary, have either received, or are seeking for honors and titles from the Government of England.

And what has been the result of this peculiar position of the French in Canada? Cut off from all close political sympathies with Europe, they turn towards their native land, which they cherish with a tender affection. As I said before, what country have they left to love if it be not Canada? And love it they do, with all the enthusiasm of which their ardent natures are capable. No other countries have, for them, such mountains or such rivers, as their own. From Gaspe to Lachine old traditions linger amongst the people. They glory in a

French Canadian Literature

of great merit, and what a shout of triumph they sent up the other day, when Louis Fr  chette, their own poet laureate, won the crown of the French Academy, which he now modestly wears, rejoicing in the high honor, rather for his country than for himself. In the long winter evenings, and in the soft twilights of a Northern summer, may be heard throughout the land the echoes of sweet and simple melodies—these are their *chansons*, or songs of the people—Canadian words, sung to Canadian airs. The brave *voyageurs* had their merry boat songs for generations before Tom Moore supplied us with our favorite substitute for a national air.

If the *habitants* fought to the bitter end to save Canada from the British invaders of 1759, so were they to be found rallying under the standard of a DeSalaberry to repulse the American invaders of their soil in 1812. The French Canadian owes no divided allegiance. It is "Canada First," and Canada to the last, with him. In my judgment there is no more hopeful element of national strength in the Dominion than the solid mass of Canadian patriotism that exists in the Province of Quebec. If they do not trust us entirely, it is only because they do not believe that we are as good Canadians as themselves. Let us show them that we indeed value our

Canadian Citizenship.

In the coming struggle for the right to make our own Commercial Treaties, if we show them that we are in earnest, and call upon them as brother Canadians to assist us, we shall not appeal in vain.

Our commercial independence cannot be long withheld. Does this, then, mean the severance of British connection? To my mind the refusal of commercial independence would be destructive of British connection; but its frank concession would, beyond anything else, strengthen the silken chain that links us to the motherland. If British statesmen desire this connection to continue (and I believe they do), they should see to it that our material interests are not made to clash too violently with our sentiments. While we would not hesitate to sacrifice material interests, and treasure, and blood, for a sentiment where old England is concerned, still, if we felt that the English Government of the day were stubbornly and tyrannically standing in the

way of our fullest freedom in a matter where their merely commercial interests clashed with ours, a feeling of hostility and resentment would spring up which could not be controlled. This must not be. In spite of the repressive tendencies of some imperial statesmen, abetted by those reactionary public men of our own, to whom I have referred, a

New System

must be applied to the government of our Half-Continent. That System is simple and just in theory, and could not fail in practice. The Parliament of Canada must control and use the royal prerogative for the purpose of regulating our foreign commercial relations. That will enable us to govern ourselves in the name of the Queen. That will cause "Victoria" to be the symbol of our Commonwealth. In matters of legislation, of executive and judicial power within the Dominion, we freely use that symbol now. Let us be permitted to carry it abroad among the nations of the earth for purposes of peaceful commerce. This is what we ask. No patriotic Canadian will be satisfied with less.

We Canadians are essentially a democratic people, and have small disposition to humble ourselves unduly before high-sounding titles, or glittering rank. We have no desire to see a Court transplanted here, nor an aristocracy imported. Yet the most democratic of countries must have a Head of the State, not to be dreaded as a tyrant, nor worshipped as half divine, but to be supported and respected as the embodiment of the popular will, and as the symbol of the nation's greatness and power. Loyalty to such a sovereign increases the self-respect of the subject who yields it. To throw the halo of majesty around the exercise of royal prerogatives, which the people's representatives control, is to

Exalt the Power of the People.

Would our loyalty to the Head of the British Empire be impaired by concessions which would render her in deed and in truth our sovereign--Queen of England still, but Queen of the Canadians as well?

Has the attachment to the Throne been weakened in England since royal prerogatives fell absolutely under the control of the House of Commons? History tells us that not only has the honor and credit of the Crown been better maintained, but the personal popularity of the sovereign, who trusts her people, has been vastly enhanced. The same effect must follow the same cause in Canada. What we claim as a right should be conceded to us by the Empire on the lower ground of expediency. It would bind us to support the monarch whose very name would represent the people of Canada to the world. We would have a common interest with our fellow subjects of the British Isles in upholding that name paramount at home and abroad, because it would then be at once the emblem of our emancipation, and the token of a closer and more honorable alliance with the Motherland.

